

# RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER.

*"Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy."*

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VOL. I.

## FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

### *Extracts of Correspondence.*

*Report of the Rev. Ebenezer Henderson, relative to his visit to Iceland, for the purpose of carrying into effect the Plans of the British and Foreign Bible Society in that Island.*

Having, by the kind providence of God, attained the object of my mission to Iceland, it now becomes my no less pleasing than bounden duty, to furnish the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society with a detailed account of the measures I found it necessary to pursue for that purpose, and the results with which they have been accompanied.

Previously to my leaving Copenhagen, I succeeded in getting 2,123 copies of the Icelandic Bible, and 4,108 copies of the New Testament shipped for seven of the principal mercantile stations on the Island, at which places they were directed to be left till it should be in my power to forward proper orders as to the most eligible mode of bringing them into circulation. On the 8th of June, 1814, I took my departure for Reykiavik, where, after a tedious passage, I arrived on the 15th of July, and received a hearty welcome from the natives, who had already been apprised of the object of my visit.

Owing to the lateness of my arrival, it was with regret I found that the most favourable opportunity for the distribution of the Scriptures that season was irretrievably lost. Had I come a month sooner, I should have arrived in the very middle of the *Handels-tid*, or period of traffic, when numbers of the inhabitants repair to Reykiavik from all the quarters of the island, and barter their home produc-

tions for articles of foreign importation. They had now all returned to their respective districts; and there was no other way of acquainting them with the supply that had arrived, than by sending an express to the different corners, or travelling myself around the coast. The latter mode I preferred, on various accounts, as I should thereby have it in my power to ascertain the actual wants of the people; leave copies as specimens on passing along; make the necessary arrangements with the merchants and others for their circulation in the vicinity of the sea-ports to which they had been forwarded from Copenhagen.

The singular nature of the island, arising chiefly from the repeated and awful volcanic revolutions to which it has been subjected, together with the small degree of progress the inhabitants have made in the more useful arts, render travelling a matter of much difficulty and inconvenience. I was under the necessity of providing myself with a tent, horses, provisions, &c. as if I had intended to penetrate some of the vast deserts of Asia.— Having resolved to strike in a direct line, through the interior, to the northern shores, and then pursue my route round the coast to Reykiavik, and made certain arrangements for the circulation of the Scriptures in the southern districts during my absence, I set off from that town on the 26th of July, in company with Captain Von Scheel, one of the Danish officers employed in surveying the island, to whom I would here acknowledge my very great obligations for the advice and assistance which, in a variety of ways, he afforded me in the prosecution of my design. Our first station was a small farm, on the southern margin of the Thingvalla Lake, the inhabitants of which were extremely poor, and (what was most to be de-

ployed) they were destitute of the Bible. A copy which I gave them the following morning, was received with every demonstration of gratitude and joy. The road, or rather track, now lay across the ruins of nature, a vast region of lava, cracked and rent in the most dreadful manner, and often presenting deep chasms, between which there was scarcely sufficient space for the horses to proceed. Into the largest of these we were obliged to descend with our horses, and were struck with wonder at the force which has disrupted the solid masses of calcined rock, so as to form a gap not less than 180 feet deep, in many places nearly of the same width, and about three miles in length. Close to this stupendous fissure, is the spot where the Christian Religion was publicly established by law, A. D. 1000, and where the General Assembly of the nation continued to be held for nearly nine hundred years. Arriving at Thingvalla Church, we resolved to await the arrival of our baggage, which had proceeded by a more circuitous route. The Pastor is an aged man of seventy. His parish consists only of twelve families; and though he could not furnish me with any certain statement, yet he did not believe there were more than two, or, at the most, three of them that had a copy of the Bible.

After dinner, we proceeded across the plain, which is completely filled with lava, trembling, at times, at the monstrous parallel fissures which yawned upon us on every side; and, after advancing with difficulty through another dismal volcanic tract, we came to the hot springs of Laugarvatn, in which the greater number of the inhabitants were baptised in the above mentioned year, on their return from the Assembly. Both here and at our next station, the Geysers, the people discovered the most ardent desire to possess the divine oracles. The surprising physical appearances which are exhibited every where around them, are certainly calculated, in a very eminent degree, to excite in their

minds the most sublime conceptions of the power and majesty of God; but, instead of affording any relief to a mind burdened with a sense of guilt, they are calculated to aggravate its terrors, and drive it to the last stage of despair. The Bible, on the other hand, while it strengthens every impression made by nature of the Divine greatness, majesty, and power, introduces the message of mercy, and warrants the repentant sinner to view the Omnipotent Jehovah as his Father and Friend.

At the Geysers, the most magnificent and astonishing hot spouting fountains in the world, we spent two days, chiefly with a view to rest our horses, and fit them for a desert and mountain journey, several days in length. We were here surrounded by numerous orifices and craters, filled with hot water, from several of which columns, from three to ten feet in diameter, were darted at irregular intervals, some of them to the height of nearly an hundred feet in the atmosphere, enveloped in voluminous clouds of steam, and accompanied with subterranean reports, and a concussion of the ground beneath our feet. I doubt if a scene more grand and impressive be displayed within the limits of the visible creation; yet it only exhibits "the hiding of *His* power," who is "wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working;" of whose operations, when we have known the most, we are compelled to exclaim, "Lo, these are parts of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him!" Job xxvi. 14.

At the last house, on the south side of the island, I found an old defective copy of the second part of the Old Testament. As the family was poor, I gave a New Testament to the children; on which two of them immediately read a portion aloud; and it was pleasing to observe, from the manner of the eldest, a girl of about eighteen, and the emphasis she laid on the proper words, that she not only understood, but seemed to feel the importance of what she read. It was



part of the Evangelic history of the sufferings of the Redeemer. On my return the same way this summer, I was still more gratified to find that the girl had made an astonishing use of the New Testament during the winter, for there was not a passage to which I made the most indirect reference, which she did not quote with the same facility and accuracy, as if she were reading it from the book. We now bade farewell to the habitations of men, and traversed a vast inhospitable waste, consisting, for the most part, of calcined stones and volcanic sand, with here and there a stream of lava, and walled in on both sides by ice mountains of immense size. Excepting three or four small spots, not the least trace of vegetation was to be seen, and between two of the stations, we had a long ride of nearly fifty miles. On the fifth day from our entering this desert, we descended into the beautiful valley of Eyafjord, and made the best of our way to the first farm, called Tjornombæ, where we pitched our tents, and experienced much hospitality from the inhabitants. This valley is well peopled; but it was with concern I learned, that few copies of the Scriptures were to be found in it. The same evening I sold a Bible and New Testament, and gave away two New Testaments gratuitously. I could have sold many more, but was obliged to save them for specimens, and pacify the people with the promise that they would soon receive them in plenty. One of those who obtained a New Testament discovered an uncommon degree of humble simplicity. On receiving the book it was hardly possible for him to contain his joy; and as a number of people had now collected about the door of my tent, I caused him to read the third chapter of John, when they all sat or knelt on the grass, and listened with the most devout attention. As he proceeded, the tears began to trickle down their cheeks, and they were all seemingly much affected. The scene was, doubtless, as new to them as it was to me. To describe the pleasure

I felt on the occasion is really impossible. I forgot all the fatigues of travelling through the desert, and, indeed, to enjoy another such evening I could travel twice the distance.

On passing down the valley, we came to Hrafnagil, where the Dean of Eyafjord resides, when I immediately delivered him a letter of introduction, which I had received from the Bishop. The intelligence it conveyed proved as welcome as it was new and unexpected; and the Dean kindly assured me, that, independently of the letter from the Bishop, I should have found him ready to lend me all the aid he could afford, in carrying the benevolent designs of the Society into effect. As he was to commence his autumnal visitation the day following, he promised to enjoin on his Clergy the institution of an inquiry into the state of their parishes with respect to Bibles, that the necessary quantity might be ordered from Copenhagen: and in a letter which I received from him in the course of the winter, was inclosed a list, made up from the returns, by which it appeared, that no less than 334 subscriptions had been received for Bibles, and 138 for New Testaments, (all of which were to be paid for at the Society's price,) and that 113 Bibles, and 96 Testaments would be needed besides, for gratuitous distribution.

We arrived at the factory of Akureyri, on the 4th of August, and the following day I was happy in having an opportunity of executing a commission I had received from Bishop Vidalin. Previously to my departure from Reykiavik, his lordship jokingly said, that on my arrival in the north, it would be in my power to settle a serious dispute which had arisen between two of his clergy, and that he invested me with full powers to that end. The subject of difference was a copy of the Bible, which had been lent from a church on the main land, but had been so long in the possession of the church at Grimsey, that the clergyman of that place refused to give it up to the church to which it origin-

ally belonged. Indeed, his unwillingness to part with it cannot be a matter of surprise, when we reflect that it was the only copy among twelve families, residing on an island thirty miles from the main land, and who are so extremely poor, that there is scarcely an individual among them capable of purchasing a Bible, though sold at the most moderate price. As he was at this time at the factory himself, I had some conversation with him, and not only gave him a copy for the use of the parish till the proper supply should arrive, but also one for his own use, as I found his circumstances did not admit of his purchasing one. The same evening I sold a Bible and New Testament to a peasant, who had come from a neighbouring parish on purpose to buy them. His wife had been at the factory in the forenoon, and though she was desired to wait till the general distribution took place, the desire of obtaining copies, which was excited in the family on her return, was so great, that her husband was obliged to set off, and try if his application would not be more successful. I still endeavoured to persuade him to wait, as I had so few copies; but he would take no refusal, and insisted, that if I did not let him have the Bible now, I should at least receive the payment, that he might be sure of it next year. Besides what I sold him, he wished to have six New Testaments, that each of his children might be furnished with a copy.

Being in the vicinity of Holum, I could not deny myself the pleasure of visiting that venerable place, where, in former times, so much had been effected for supplying the island with the Holy Scriptures. No less than three folio editions were printed here; the first and best of which made its appearance in the year 1584.

On inquiry, I discovered that scarcely a copy of the Scriptures was now to be found in the valley in which Holum is situated; and, from a more recent investigation, it appears, that in the contiguous and populous district of Skagafjord, there is one parish, con-

sisting of about 200 souls, yet in possession of only *four* Bibles, and another in which there were only *three* copies among *fifty* families. On my return from Holum, the peasants all left the meadows, and came running to the road, to see me, and have some conversation about the Scriptures: when they wished that a thousand blessings might descend on me, and the good Christians who had sent me among them. Some were very particular in their inquiries about the reasons that induced us to do so much good to Iceland; while others satisfied themselves as to the size of the present edition, and the source from which it had been derived.

Having digested a plan with the Dean and Sheriff, relative to the circulation of the Scriptures in these parts, I took my departure from Eya-fjord, the 13th of August, and arrived the same evening at the church and parsonage of Hals, where I was very affectionally received by the Clergyman, to whom I had a letter of recommendation from the Bishop. On learning the object of my visit, he informed me that a considerable number, both of Bibles and New Testaments, would be needed for the three parishes of which he is Rector: for though copies of the New Testament printed in 1807, had been circulated among them, they rather tended to make the wants of the people more visible, than afford them any adequate supply. The next day, being the Lord's day, I attended divine service in the church. Both in the sermon and one of the prayers, the most express notice was taken of the provision made for the spiritual wants of the inhabitants, by the recent impressions of the Scriptures. Before dismissing the congregation, the clergyman gave them intimation of the new Bible, and desired such as wished to furnish themselves with copies to give him their names. We had scarcely got into the house, when it was crowded with people, who pushed forward with uncommon eagerness, calling out, "put *me* down for a Bible — *me* for a Bible and New Testament



—me for *three* New Testaments," &c. They expressed the peculiar satisfaction they derived from the idea, that it would be in their power to furnish their children with this infallible Directory.

Early on Monday morning, I prosecuted my journey, accompanied by the clergyman, his son, and one of his servants. We had not rode many steps, when we all took off our hats for about the space of five minutes, and implored the Divine mercy and protection. This laudable and impressive custom is universally practised in such parts of Iceland as remain uncontaminated by the influence of those foreigners who "live without God in the world." Before crossing, and after having crossed a river, the genuine Iclander also moves his hat, in token of the sense he entertains of his dependence on the Supreme Being; and the fishermen, when they put to sea, all take off their hats, and send up a prayer, committing themselves to the protection of God, and soliciting his blessing on their labour. The following day I arrived at Greniadarstad, the abode of the Dean, the Rev. Mr. Sheving. The Dean is an aged man, has the superintendence of eighteen parishes, and performs the duties of the ministerial office in that in which he lives. According to the account he gave me, the greatest scarcity of Bibles prevailed in this part of the island; and he did not believe there were more than two copies to be found in his own parish. With a view to meet the returns from the different clergymen, he has since ordered about 300 copies of the whole Bible, and 150 New Testaments.

I now entered the dreary volcanic regions of Mivatu, which together with the desert of Modrudal, it was necessary for me to traverse, in order to reach the eastern coast. To whatever side I turned, nothing presented itself to my view, but the dismal effects of subterranean fires, and the most lucid proofs of the decomposition which the earth is still undergoing at this place. At one time I had to pass over a track of lava between two parallel rents, the

bottom of which I could not discover, from the quantity of smoke they continued to send forth; and at some places the space between them was scarcely sufficient to allow the horses to pass: at another time I was separated from semi-liquid beds of burning sulphur only by a deceitful crust, which, in some places, was so thin, that on the horse's foot sinking in the mould a hole was made, from which a quantity of steam issued with a hissing noise. The road here lies across a mountain of brimstone, which sends up, without intermission, immense columns of smoke into the atmosphere. At Reykiahlid, or, "The Smoaking Mountain-Side," where I pitched my tent for a night, I was greatly struck at the appearance of the church, which, in almost a miraculous manner, escaped the general conflagration in the year 1728. Reaching the north-west corner of the low earthen wall, by which the churchyard is enclosed, the fiery torrent that was poured down from the adjacent mountain, has been suddenly arrested in its progress; and, at the distance of only two feet from the wall, had divided into two separate streams, by which it has pursued its course, till, advancing about twenty yards, the streams have again united, and left the church and burying-ground uninjured amidst the surrounding flames. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

(To be continued.)

FROM THE SOUTH-SEA ISLANDS.

*Missionary Reports, (London,) September, 10, 1816.*

Sir—The following most pleasing intelligence, just received from the South Seas, is transmitted to you, by order of the Directors, for whom I am, Sir, your's truly,

GEORGE BURDER.

*Letter from the Missionaries in Eimeo. Eimeo, Sept. 6, 1815.*

Honoured Fathers and Brethren—  
Providence favouring us again with

an opportunity, we think it our duty to acquaint you briefly with our own circumstances, and those of the Mission since the date of our last, which was Jan. 14, 1815; a duplicate of which accompanies this.

But before we enter particularly into the state of the Mission, and of affairs among the islanders, we shall mention some particulars of things among ourselves. Though, at all times, we look upon the term of our abode among mortals as most uncertain, yet the many deaths around us, our own frequent illness, and various afflictions since our residence on this island, tend still more to call our attention to this subject; and under these impressions, we have in our last, as well as twice before, entreated the Directors to "take the state of this Mission into serious consideration; and, if possible, to provide for its wants, by sending some suitable Missionaries to our assistance before we sink into the grave, leaving our poor people destitute of instruction."

We have now to inform the Society, that a melancholy event, which took place very soon after the above was written, appears to urge the request with peculiar energy: for it hath pleased the Lord, in his wise, yet to us mysterious providence, to make another breach among us, by unexpectedly removing from us to the eternal world our late Brother Scott. The immediate cause of his death was a bowel complaint, to which he had often been subject before. He was taken ill on Friday evening, and died on the Thursday following, the 9th of February. On that day, in the afternoon, he quitted his station among mortals, and went to join, we hope, the glorious company above. We did not, and apparently he did not himself, apprehend his end was so near, or that he was, till Thursday morning, in more dangerous circumstances than he had been several times before. - On the day of his death he spoke but little, and took but little notice of any thing; only now and

then he dropped a few words expressive of his reliance, as a helpless guilty sinner, on the All-sufficient Saviour. He was, apparently, often in prayer, and repeated "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah," and "Jesus sought me when a stranger," &c. This is another afflictive dispensation; and, as we view things, a serious loss, not only to his bereaved partner and two orphan children, but also to the Mission, as he had attained such a knowledge of the language of these islanders as enabled him to convey instruction in a plain intelligible manner, which is a more difficult attainment for an European than many are aware of.

Thus our number is lessening, while the call for instruction on the part of the natives is daily increasing. Others of us are often unwell; and the heavy work at our vessel (for such it is in our circumstances, and with so few hands,) is still unfinished. We have lately thought that the circumstances of the natives, and of the islands, call loudly for the establishment of three or four Missionary stations, including as many large schools; but we are altogether insufficient, even were the concerns of the vessel and of other matters relative to our temporal affairs entirely off our hands; we therefore again entreat the Directors to take into consideration our circumstances and those of the Mission, and the request we make, which is also now the earnest request of hundreds of these poor islanders. A delay in this matter will be probably of pernicious consequence to the Mission. A Mission, which the Lord hath been pleased to bless so abundantly, notwithstanding all former discouragements and disappointments.

In the beginning of May, we had the satisfaction of receiving by the Queen Charlotte, colonial vessel, a case of books and papers, together with various private letters and several public ones. We acknowledge with gratitude our obligations for the abundant and encouraging information which is contained in them.



From the last letter of the Directors we understand there were medicines and other supplies sent for us, but nothing of the kind has reached us; nor have we heard of any thing being in the colony. However, our need of medicines and other articles is very great, there being so much sickness among ourselves, and among the people around us, who are continually applying to us for relief in their distresses.

We have also received from the colony near 400 copies of our New Testament history, and 900 catechisms, with 100 copies of a few hymns that were composed for the use of the natives. These books came very opportunely, and were most gladly received by our people, hundreds of whom now can make use of them. We learnt also that the Old Testament part of the Scripture history was in the press at Sydney, but could not then be finished for want of paper. Brother Crook has been of great service in correcting the press, and getting these books done as well and as soon as the state of things in the colony would allow; the Rev. Mr. Marsden being absent on his voyage to New Zealand, on the affairs of the Missionary settlement at that place. We send again by this conveyance a small spelling book to be printed at Sydney; this we are in much need of, those spelling books which were printed in London being all expended, and the natives making many applications for more. For the expenses attending these little publications we must refer to Mr. Marsden and hope there will be no difficulty about the payment of them, as it will be money well employed.

But to be a little more particular concerning the state of the Mission since the date of our last. From January to the end of June, it appeared to prosper greatly: our congregations were large, and the attendance on the means of instruction constant and encouraging. The school increased rapidly, and prospered; and those who renounced heathenism,

and became the professed worshippers of the true God, were increasing daily in different parts of this island, and also at Taheite. The priest of Papetoai (the district where we reside) denounced heathenism; joined us, and publicly committed his god to the flames. Others followed his example both here and at Taheite; morais were destroyed, and the altars overthrown, and the wood of them used to dress common food, of which different classes and sexes partook at one common meal, in direct violation of ancient prohibitions and customs.

In the month of May, the queen, and her sister *cal'e l Pomare Vahine*, went over to Taheite. The latter, having lately come up from the *Leward Islands*, had never seen Taheite, but intended now, in company with a number of her people, to make the tour of the island. In the mean time the king, who had resided for some time in our neighbourhood, thought, while this party was absent, of going himself on a slow journey around *Eimeo*, stopping a while at different places, to see if he could persuade the chiefs and principal people to cast away their idols, &c. When he had proceeded in this manner as far as a small district called *Maatea*, he sent us the enclosed letter, to inform us of the state of religious affairs in that part of the island. During the month of June, we received also several letters from the party at Taheite, giving us an encouraging account of the state of things there. This party had not proceeded on their journey as they intended, but were still in the district of *Pare* where they had landed, and where the king's daughter, *Aimata*, resided with her nurse. We were informed that considerable parts of the district of *Pare*, and of the neighbouring one, *Matavai* (our old residence) had cast away their gods, and embraced the true religion. When the queen went over, the king had sent a book for his daughter. This was looked upon as a public testimony, that she was to be brought up in the new religion. This, together with the rapid

increase of the "*Bure Atua*," or "praying people," for so are our people called, excited in the idolatrous chiefs a violent spirit of persecution. They thought these things ought not to be endured any longer, but crushed altogether in time. The idolatrous chiefs of Pare; and the chief of Hapaiano, got some of the chiefs of Matavai to join them in a conspiracy against the *Bure Atua*, and it was proposed to cut them off entirely, root and branch. But thinking themselves unequal to the task, those of the new religion being already formidable, both in number and respectability, they acquainted the chiefs of Atahura and Papara with their views and intentions, and invited them to join them. These, though their ancient rivals and enemies, came most readily into the measure, and prepared to unite with them without delay; and on the night of July the 7th, these combined forces were to fall, without mercy, on those who had renounced heathenism, and exterminate them; but some of the parties being rather dilatory, and secret intelligence having been conveyed to the party whose ruin was determined upon, and they happening to be that evening, most of them, together by the sea side, they quickly got on board their canoes, and set sail for Eimeo, where they arrived, and were safely landed the following morning. The disappointed chiefs then quarrelled among themselves; and the Atahurians, &c. fell upon the Porionu party, that is, upon the party who began the affair and had invited them. They fought; the Porionu were defeated, and a number of men killed, among whom was one of their principal chiefs, and a promoter of the war. The Atahurians, and those of Papara, being joined by Taiarabu, burnt, plundered, and cleared away before them, the whole of the N. E. part of Taheite, from the borders of Atahura to the Isthmus. The question about religion seems now quite forgotten: and the different parties fought to revenge old quarrels that happened many years ago. Some time after, the Taiarabu people quar-

relled with those of Papara and Atahuru; fought with them, but were defeated and driven to the mountains.

When, or how, these things may end, the Lord only knows; but we cease not to pray, and do hope that these commotions will, in the end, be the means of furthering the good of the Mission. A great number of refugees are come over from Taheite, and still continue to arrive. The king has repeatedly sent messages of peace to the chiefs of the conquering party; and they have repeatedly answered, that there is peace between them and him; though they have not yet settled old affairs among themselves. But though the king and our people have no desire to meddle with the commotions at Taheite, except to promote peace, and do not intend to act, but as neutrals, or in self-defence, should it prove necessary; yet the affairs of Taheite have thrown things in this island into great confusion for some weeks past, and we have not been without our fears and alarms. The Lord, however, hath been pleased hitherto, to control and over-rule these affairs in a wonderful manner. They have taken a turn, entirely undesigned, and unexpected by the first projectors of the war; and our people, whose destruction was aimed at, hitherto escaped; this is a matter for praise, and for thankfulness.

Brother Crook has written to us, expressing his desire and intention of coming to join us; and this, in one point of view, we should be heartily glad of, as we are so much in want of assistance, and he would be able immediately to manage a large native school; but on the other hand, the present commotions, and his large family, are considerations of such importance, that we do not well know what to say; however we wrote both to him and the Rev. Mr. Marsden on the subject, representing our want of assistance, and also the present state of the islands. We do not wish to discourage him, yet we apprehend the present commotions likely to have effect. The consideration of his nu-



merous family, of great weight; for should he come and be soon removed by death, what is to become of them? And this leads to a subject nearly a-kin, which we would submit to the consideration of the Directors, viz.—In case of any of the Missionaries dying, and leaving his wife behind him, or wife and family, as is the case now of Mrs. Scott and her two children—we ask, how is the widow, or widow and family of such Missionary to be supported? What dependence has she on the Society for necessary support? either in case she remains in the Mission, or chooses to return to New South Wales, or to England?

We would again remind the Directors of the great desirableness of sending assistance to us speedily, whether Brother Crook should join us or not; and that it would be of very great service to this Mission to have a printing-press, and a person who knows how to manage it; and next to this a person having a good share of medical skill, if also of a true Missionary spirit; this would be to the Mission a most valuable acquisition.

Yesterday morning being our usual Missionary Prayer Meeting, at the close of which thirty-nine more natives requested their names to be written down, which was done: the number is now about 362, not including some who were put away for bad conduct, and others who died, some with very hopeful appearance of their dying in the Lord. The school has also increased to upwards of 660, but we cannot admit more for want of books.

With this we send a friendly and kind letter, which we have just received from his Excellency Governor Macquarrie, to whom we are under many obligations, and we submit it to the Directors, whether it would not be well for them to send him a friendly letter? He takes a warm interest in the prosperity of this Mission, is well acquainted with us and our proceedings, and on all occasions has shown a readiness to serve us—but not to add any thing more to this already long letter, we shall conclude, subscribing

ourselves, Honoured Fathers and Brethren, yours in the bonds of the Gospel.

HENRY BICKNELL,  
JOHN DAVIES,  
JAMES HAYARD,  
WILLIAM HENRY,  
HENRY NOTT,  
CHARLES WILSON,  
SAMUEL TESSIER.

*Fram the Report of the Religious Tract Society in Berlin.*

During the last year, upwards of 100,000 different tracts have been dispersed in the most remote provinces of the Kingdom of Prussia, given to Soldiers marching to the field and to the Sick in Lazzarettoes. May the Lord of the great vineyard graciously protect, cherish, and bless the seed thus sown.

Although every one in his own circle must have had occasion to observe and experience the mighty and incessant workings of the Holy Spirit upon the hearts of men, it will probably not be superfluous in this place to mention the following occurrences, as they may lead to the praise of God and the invigoration of Faith; and prove an encouragement to proceed cheerfully on the road now opened.

Of more than six hundred Soldiers and Subalterns, to whom lately, among other religious books, the small tracts, intitled, *The Brave Soldier*; or, *The Life of Peter Labbeck*; and *The History of the English Sailor Coney*, had been given, many took these little books with visible emotions, and many with the most expressive and heartfelt gratitude;—not a single one among them shewed the least signs of thoughtlessness or scorn.

Four Soldiers belonging to Anhalt, after being discharged, cured, from a French Hospital at Sedan, went several leagues out of their way in order to thank a worthy Clergyman at Eisleben personally for a devotional Book, which having been given to one of their comrades, had fallen into their hands, and greatly comforted them during their stay in the Hospital.

It would be tedious to cite more instances, as every accurate observer of the ways of the Lord will often have occasion to acknowledge that the ends of Divine Mercy are thus abundantly promoted. It is however worthy of mention, that, soon after the receipt and distribution of the Books and Tracts of Mr. Schirding, a person in dying circumstances was so refreshed, strengthened, and comforted, by having one of the smaller Tracts read to him; that he quitted his earthly abode full of hope and joy.

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### DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE.

#### REPORT

*Of the Prudential Committee, of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.*

Continued from p. 413.

Your committee have attended to these representations with a very lively interest; and under the impression which they made, have judged it advisable to institute a specific charity under the denomination of the School Fund, or the Fund for the Education of Heathen Youth and Children. The monies of this fund, it should be distinctly understood, are intended to be applied to the maintenance of such young objects of christian charity as may be taken into our missionary families; to the support of free schools for heathen children and youth in India, in America, and in any and every place where our missions may be established; to the supply of schools and of individuals with copies of the Scriptures, and such other books and tracts as shall be deemed needful; and, also, if found necessary, to the defraying of the expenses incurred in supporting and educating such heathen youth as have been, or may hereafter be, brought into our own country, and may, with fair prospects of usefulness, be designated to be sent back as preachers or teachers to their respective native lands. In the success of a fund so interesting in its ob-

ject to every christian, every generous and philanthropic feeling, great confidence was entertained from the first. In this confidence, it was said to the missionaries, in a letter, written at the time. "While we would have you take your measures with wisdom and good economy, we wish you not to feel yourselves bound hand or foot. Open your hearts to enlarged and generous views; let your plans be comprehensive and well combined; act with system, with vigor and with perseverance; and depend, under Providence, on us and the christian public for the requisite pecuniary means." The committee have great satisfaction in being able to state, that their confidence has not deceived them; that the Fund for the Education of Heathen Youth and Children, has been, in different places and extensively, received with peculiar favour and interest; and that so far as appears it only needs attention on the part of this Board and its Auxiliaries to render it a perennial and copious source of widely extended blessings.

Your committee have to regret, that from our missionaries at Bombay no communications have been received of a later date than 29th Nov. last; and from those who sailed the last autumn, destined for Ceylon, only the bare intelligence of their arrival at that island has been received. It is already well understood, that this last company, though directed to Ceylon, were not however restricted by their instructions to that island; but were left at their well advised discretion, as to the place or places, where they should fix their station or stations.—From the first it was thought highly desirable, if practicable, that one or more of them should join the mission at Bombay. This appeared to the committee still more desirable and important, when they were made acquainted with Mr. Nott's determination to relinquish the mission; and in the letters which have since been sent out, the desire has been earnestly expressed that no legitimate means should be neglected to procure acces-



to Bombay for at least two of the last five. They are all however in the hands of Him, who is to have the heathen for his inheritance, and whose servants they are; and to his providential direction and disposal, with fervent prayers and with cheerful submission, they may safely be confided.

In regard to the Pagan Aborigines of our own country, the measures of the committee may not have advanced so fast, as the expectations of the Christian public, or even of this board. The committee are fully aware, that many friends of the missions, not only in this country, but also in Europe, have thought it strange, that while so much has been doing for the distant heathen of India, so little should have been done for the not less destitute tribes on our continent, and within our own borders. The seeming neglect of these tribes, however, is not imputable to a forgetfulness of them on the part of the committee, or to a want of an earnest desire to do something for their benefit. But the measures which have been concerted for this purpose have from time to time been frustrated, or impeded, by causes utterly beyond the power of the committee to control. At present however, measures are in such a train as to animate the hope of a gratifying result. Our missionary, the Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury, who has devoted himself to the service with a view especially to the American Indians, has been directed to proceed as soon as convenient from the State of Tennessee, where he has been employed under a temporary commission from the Connecticut Missionary Society, into the Cherokee country, for the purpose of making the requisite preparations for the establishment there of a mission, and of mission schools, agreeably to the plan exhibited in our last annual Report. When on his way to the westward, in pursuance of his instructions he communicated the design of the Board to the Heads of Departments, at Washington, and solicited their patronage. They gave him a favourable hearing,

expressed their decided approbation of the design, and their disposition to render it every facility and aid which the laws would permit; and by order of the President of the United States, the Secretary at War stated, officially, that "In the first instance, the Agent (for Indian affairs) will be directed to erect a comfortable school-house, and another for the teacher, and such as may board with him, in such part of the nation as will be selected for the purpose. He will also be directed to furnish two ploughs, six hoes, and as many axes, for the purpose of introducing the art of cultivation among the pupils. Whenever he is informed that female children are received, and brought into the school, and that a female teacher has been engaged, capable of teaching them to spin, weave, and sew, a loom and half a dozen spinning wheels and as many pair of cards will be furnished. He will be directed, from time to time, to cause other school-houses to be erected, as they shall become necessary, and as the expectation of ultimate success shall justify the expenditure. The houses thus erected, and the implements of husbandry and of the mechanical arts which shall be furnished, will remain public property to be occupied and employed for the benefit of the Nation. If the persons, who are about to engage in this enterprise, should abandon it, the buildings and utensils which shall have been furnished, may be occupied by any other teachers of good moral character. The only return which is expected by the President is an annual report of the state of the school, its progress, and its future prospects.

At Washington Mr. Kingsbury had opportunity of conversing repeatedly with Col. Meigs, Agent for the Cherokees, and with a Chief and two other men of the tribe, then at the city. "The Agent," he says, "may be relied upon as a firm and substantial friend to the object of the mission. The Indians also appeared pleased with the design, and said it would be highly gratifying to the nation; that

they had long wished to have schools established, and had thought of devoting a part of their annuity to the object, but in consequence of some embarrassments had felt themselves unable."

Three young men have offered themselves, with very good recommendations, and have been accepted by the committee, to be employed in teaching the mission schools. One of them, Mr. Moody Hall, is now under the direction of the Committee, in a Lancasterian school, for the purpose of becoming well versed in that method of instruction, and all of them hold themselves in readiness for the service. As soon, therefore, as information shall be received from Mr Kingsbury of the requisite preparations being in sufficient forwardness, these teachers may be sent out, and the business may be commenced.

Although the object of civilizing and christianizing the small and scattered tribes of American Indians bears no comparison in magnitude with that of evangelizing the vastly numerous and crowded population of the Eastern World; yet it is an object of too great importance to be overlooked, deeply interesting in itself, and presenting very peculiar claims upon the consciences, the feelings, and the liberalities of American Christians. Nor should it be regarded as a hopeless enterprise. The history of missions records few instances since the apostolic age, perhaps indeed none in proportion to the expense and exertion, of greater success in the conversion of heathens, than that which attended the labours of Eliot, the Mayhews, and Brainerd, among the Indians. It is no wonder that since their day little has been achieved; for little, very little, has been attempted. The spirit of Eliot, of the Mayhews, and of Brainerd has for a long time slept. Never indeed has the work of civilizing and christianizing our Indian tribes been taken up on a well concerted and extended plan, and conducted with vigor and perseverance; never has such

an experiment been made as is now contemplated. To establish schools in the different parts of the tribe, under missionary direction and superintendence, for the instruction of the rising generation in common school learning, in the useful arts of life, and in Christianity, so as gradually, with the divine blessing to make the whole tribe English in their language, civilized in their habits, and Christian in their religion; this is the present plan; and the more it has been contemplated, the more it has presented itself to the minds of the Committee, as being decidedly preferable to any other which has been adopted or proposed. Were the Bible now translated into all the languages of the Indian tribes, it would be of no more use to them than our English Bible; for they could read it no better. They may be taught to read the Bible in the English language with as much ease, as they could be taught to read it in their own; and having learned to read the English language, the sources of knowledge and means of general improvement then opened to them will be incomparably greater and more various than their own language could ever procure for them. Assimilated in language, they will more readily become assimilated in habits and manners to their white neighbours; intercourse will be easy and the advantages to them incalculable. The missionaries, meanwhile, will make themselves acquainted with the language of the tribe and preach to the aged as well as to the young; and they will avail themselves of the various and precious advantages, which the education of the children will afford, to gain the most favourable access to the parents, and to communicate the knowledge of salvation, and the blessings of civilized life to the people of every age.

Besides the missionaries already employed, five young men, three of them educated at the Theological Seminary at Andover, and two of them at the Theological Seminary at Princeton, and all of them licensed preach-



ers of the Gospel, now hold themselves devoted to the service, to be employed under the patronage of this Board, as wisdom shall direct.

(To be concluded.)

*At a Meeting of a number of the Inhabitants of the town of Milford, pursuant to public notice, Oct. 28th, 1816, for the purpose of forming a Bible Society:*

Mr. PINNEO was appointed chairman, and Mr. SCRANTON secretary of the meeting.

*Voted*, That we deem it expedient to form at this time, a Bible Society in this town.

Whereupon the following preamble and Constitution were agreed to.

In the formation of the American Bible Society, we behold a grand and noble scheme for doing good; a scheme for spreading the sacred Scriptures in those dark regions where they have hitherto been unenjoyed and unknown. We hail it as forming the brightest era in the history of our country.

Believing that the universal distribution of the Bible, is the great and divinely appointed means of diffusing light, and joy, and happiness in our fallen world, and of ushering in the glory of the latter day; knowing also that millions of our fellow creatures are destitute and many crying for help. We the Subscribers, anxious to assist in a work so benevolent, and so necessary, and that promises such extensive good, engage to form ourselves into a Bible Society; and to regulate ourselves by the following CONSTITUTION.

1. The Society shall be called the Milford Branch Bible Society.

2. The great object of the Society shall be to aid the Bible Society of the County of New-Haven, in the more extensive circulation of the Holy Scriptures.

3. There shall be annually chosen a President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary, Treasurer, who together with six Directors, shall constitute a board of managers, to conduct the business of the Society.

4. Each subscriber of one dollar, shall be a member for one year.

5. Each subscriber of ten dollars, at any one time, shall be a member for life.

6. Any person continuing to pay his annual subscription for fifteen years, shall be a member for life.

7. They who once become members of the Society, shall be considered members till they have requested the Secretary to erase their names.

8. Life subscribers will be expected to pay the amount of their subscription into the Treasury, at the time of joining the Society; and annual subscribers, at each annual meeting of the Society. In case of failure, it will be the duty of the Directors to see that the subscriptions are collected, and paid into the Treasury as soon as may be.

9. All monies paid into the Treasury, shall be paid over to the Bible Society of this County, in consideration of the advantages held out to Branch Societies, always reserving to ourselves the right of constituting the ministers of this town, life-members of the American Bible Society.\*

10. The Society shall meet annually on the first wednesday in October, to hear the Report of their Treasurer, and choose their officers, and transact such other business as shall be brought before them.

11. Each meeting of the Society shall be opened with prayer. There shall also be an annual address delivered before the Society, by some person previously appointed.

12. The Secretary shall keep a list of the subscribers, and shall record the doings of the Society.

13. This Constitution may not be altered except by two thirds of the members present, at any regular meeting of the Society.

The Rev. BEZALEEL PINNEO was chosen President.

\* *Voted*, That so much money of this Society be paid over to the American Bible Society, as is necessary to constitute the ministers of this town life members of said Society.

Mr. ABIAH CARRINGTON, Rev. CALEB PITKIN, Deacon ELIAS CLARK, were chosen Vice-Presidents.

Rev. ERASTUS SCRANTON, Secretary.

Mr. NATHAN NETTLETON, Treasurer.

Mr. HORATIO DOWN, Deacon WILLIAM FENN, Mr. RICHARD FENN, Mr. SAMUEL HIGBY, Deacon JOSEPH PRUDEN, and Mr. BENJAMIN FENN, Jun. were chosen Directors.

On the 30th October, a Meeting was holden at Green's Farms, Fairfield, (Con.) for the purpose of forming a Female Bible Society, auxiliary to and co-operating with the American Bible Society in circulating the Holy Scriptures.

The meeting was opened with an appropriate prayer by the Rev. Dr. Ripley: after which the following ladies were chosen as Officers for the ensuing year:

Mrs. Eben Jessup, *President*.

Mrs. J. Wilson, Mrs. J. Hyde, *Vice-Presidents*.

Mrs. David Ripley, Mrs. Esther Jessup, Mrs. Wm. Richards, Mrs. Joseph Adams, Mrs. Zalmon Burr, Mrs. Mary Andrews, Mrs. Louis Raymond, *Managers*.

Mrs. Simon Couch, *Treasurer*.

Miss Eleanor Hyde, *Secretary*.

The Female Beneficent Society of Windham, a Society which has been recently established, has appropriated 30 dollars to constitute the Rev. Cornelius B. Everest a life member of the American Bible Society.

*From the Christian Herald.*

JUVENILE BIBLE SOCIETY.

Plattsburgh, (N. Y.) Nov. 7, 1816.

Dear Sir,—If you should think that the publication of the following will be calculated to do good, and stimulate others, I shall be much pleased to see it in your highly useful publication.

Greater attention is now given to the "Word of Life" than was ever before known, and no doubt much good will result from so excellent a practice. Youth are stimulated to commit its sacred contents to their memories; which is an earnest, it is

hoped, of an exemplary Christian life in more mature age.

Juvenile Associations for this purpose will always be exhilarating, to Christians of every name, as having an evident tendency to promote harmony in Christian views, and as leading to that desideratum in Christian principles, so devoutly to be wished for, when the "Watchmen of Zion shall see eye to eye," and when that "pure language" shall be "turned to the people" spoken of by Zephaniah, iii. 9. With these remarks, I send you the plan of a "Juvenile Society," for committing the Scriptures to memory, lately established by Mr. William Young, of Albany, Teacher of the Lancasterian School in this village. The usual formula of constitutions is omitted, as being needless with children from 6 to 14 years of age: the ages of the greater part of this promising association. About 40 have become members, many of whom have distinguished themselves by committing from 12 to nearly 50 verses in a week, besides attending to their usual business and school exercises.

The following is a copy of the regulations:

I. It is the design of this Juvenile Association, that the members thereof shall be distinguished in the village for their good moral character, their obedience to their parents and teachers, kindness to their school-fellows, and courtesy to their neighbours.

II. That the members shall contribute one cent per week, if possible, to buy some clothes or bread for poor children, or to give them a Bible and good books.

III. That each member shall commit to memory, every week, as many verses as may be possible, of the chapter selected by the teacher, to recite on Saturday: to meet at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. But in no case to neglect their parents' business, or their school duties.

IV. Those who have ability, to find passages of Scripture, which shall be proofs to some truth, or an answer to some question, which may be proposed one meeting previous. The proofs or answers to be written in a fair hand, signed with their own names, sealed up as a note, and delivered on the days of meeting. Those which may be approved, shall be registered for the Patron's inspection and reward.

V. Those who recite well, may commit a selection of Hymns, or some of the Psalms.

VI. Those who recite, to have the privilege of asking any question, either of the Patrons or Teachers: such as the meaning of a word, phrase, or sentiment, contained in the lesson they have recited.

VII. The officers of the Society to be



two or more Patrons, two Auditors, a Recorder, and a Treasurer.

Rev. Frederick Halsey, Rev. Nathaniel Hewit, *Patrons*; Miss Cornelia Baker, Master Amasa Winchel, *Auditors*; Miss Rhoana Flagg, *Treasurer*; Master A. B—, *Recorder*.

*Holy Bible! Book Divine! Precious Treasure! thou art mine:*

Mine, to tell me whence I came; mine, to teach me what I am!

Mine, to chide me when I rove; mine, to show a Saviour's love.

Mine art thou to guide my feet; mine, to judge, condemn, acquit!

Mine to comfort in distress, if the Holy Spirit bless;

Mine, to show by living faith, Man can triumph over death!

Mine to tell of joys to come, and the rebel sinner's doom.

Oh! thou precious Book Divine! Precious Treasure, thou art mine.

The state of religion in this place, is, on the whole, encouraging to the friends of Zion. Many are inquiring "the way" "their faces thitherward;" and many are added to the Church. In Beekmantown, a few miles from this, the attention of divine things, has been, and now is, very lively. Many youths have become savingly acquainted with "the truth as it is in Jesus;" and the aged have been led to call upon Him who will regard prayer, though at the "eleventh hour." Other places adjacent to this have had their attention drawn to the "one thing needful," and many have "chosen that good part which shall not be taken away" from them.

We certainly live in the dawn of that day "when all shall know the Lord from the least unto the greatest," and the knowledge of God "shall cover the earth as the waters do the sea." May the full day be hastened on the wings of time.

*Extract from the 10th anniversary sermon of the Rev. L. Mills, Pastor of the Congregational Church in Becket, (Mass.) June 5th 1816.*

At my ordination, (June 5th 1806,) there were, in this church, 89 members; of whom we have lost, by death and dismission, 41. Since that time, we have received into our communion, 106; of whom, also, 19 have been removed. Of course, this church now consists of 135 members; 48 males, and 87 females.

About the year 1786-7, there was a considerable attention to religion, in this town. Of the particulars I have received no information; but the effects of it are visible, to the present day.

In 1807, about a year after my ordina-

tion, a more than usual attention was manifest, among this people; and though it was confined, principally, to one section of the town, yet it resulted, in the addition of about 20 persons to this church.

From this time, ensued a long season of spiritual dearth; until, in September last, the Lord was pleased to return unto us, by the gracious visitations of his spirit. These influences were, emphatically, "like rain upon the mown grass," and, "as the small rain upon the tender herb." In truth, my brethren, the love of many had waxed cold; but I trust that some, and I hope all of us, "wept when we remembered Zion." Then it was, that we were enabled to adopt the words of "the sweet singer of Israel;" "thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof." "The Lord hearkened and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him;" and "the Lord turned again our captivity."

The work, which thus commenced, was silent, solemn, and, as far as erring human judgment can decide, genuine and free from enthusiasm. It continued in its power and progress, about five months; nor has it, as yet, entirely disappeared. As the fruits of this blessed visitation, more than seventy persons entertain hopes of an union to the Redeemer; fifty-five of whom have united themselves to this church.

How many of these conversions will abide the final trial, we will not presume even to conjecture. The record of the work is on high; and the ultimate decision we cheerfully leave with him who hath said, "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his works, and according to the fruit of his doings."

Within the period we are reviewing, the number of baptisms administered, in this church, has been 182: of which number, 34 have received the ordinance, upon their admission to the church; and 140, upon the profession of faith made by their parents.

*Extract of a letter from Putney, Vt.  
Oct. 25, 1816.*

"The attention to religion, with us, still continues: and those who have manifested a hope, give us very satisfactory evidence of their piety. We have 81 propounded to our Church; which, with those lately admitted, make about 100. This is a greater ingathering than we ever expected to see in so short a time: It is the Lord's

doings and it is marvellous in our eyes; we doubt not you will be disposed to rejoice with us.

There is yet a greater number who exhibit hopeful evidences of piety who have not offered themselves for a public profession; we hope they will soon.

Great attention we learn is manifested to serious things in the adjoining town of Westminster.

A Baptist Church has lately been established in this place. On the afternoon of the organization of the Society Elder *Henry Lines* was installed their pastor. The ceremonies and necessary business were performed in the old Episcopal Church, the use of which was politely tendered to the Baptists by its proprietors.

*New Auxiliaries to the American Bible Society.*

The Bible Society of Maine—The Bible Society of Salem and vicinity, (Mass.)—The Female Bible Society of Cincinnati, (Ohio.)

These make the number of Auxiliaries now known, to be—62.

*Stereotype Bible.*

Seven thousand copies of the Brevier Bible have been printed from the Stereotype Plates finished last summer. The first 3500 copies were struck off for the New-York and Auxiliary New-York Bible Societies, for whom the Plates were executed: Of these only about 400 copies on superfine paper remain undisposed of.—3500 copies have been printed for account of the American Bible Society, who now own the Plates. 1000 copies of these last mentioned, on common paper, are nearly all bound and ready for delivery; and 2500 on fine paper are ready to be delivered in sheets:—part of them will be bound in the course of a few days. There is also now in the press an edition of 2500 copies on fine French paper. These Bibles are all sold to Auxiliary Societies at the mere cost of the paper, press-work and binding—the value, or wear and tear of

the Plates, not being taken into the estimation.—*Chris. Her.*

*Ordinations.*

Messrs. Jesse Frost and Samuel Porter, of Waterbury, were ordained to the work of Evangelists, on Thursday, 24th Oct. There being no house sufficiently large to contain the people, the ordination took place in a field, where suitable preparations had been made. The weather being fine, a numerous and respectable audience attended the services.

On Thursday, 31st October, the Rev. Leonard Withington was ordained over the Congregational Church in Newbury, Mass. Rev. Mr. Andrews made the introductory prayer, Rev. Mr. Codman preached the Sermon from Eph. iv. 15. "But speaking the truth in love," Rev. Dr. Parish made the consecrating prayer, Rev. Mr. Millimore gave the charge, Rev. Mr. Kirby gave the right hand of fellowship, Rev. Mr. Guyle made the concluding prayer.

The services concluded with the following Hymn composed for the occasion by the Rev. Mr. W.

Saviour of men! all saints confess  
Thy sovereign power, and all obey;  
Look, we beseech Thee, down and bless  
What we weak worms have done to-day.  
Thy glorious banner floats unfurl'd  
Midst Angel-Hosts around thy throne;  
And we, against a warring world,  
Would take that banner for our own.  
Whene'er we aim (our efforts weak)  
Thy lovely awful name to preach,  
Assist our mortal tongues to speak  
What mortal tongues can never teach.  
Let ardent love our breasts inspire,  
That love let meekest wisdom guide;  
Let zeal awake its warmest fire,  
But not the zeal of sinful pride.  
Help us to keep the gospel ground,  
The dove and serpent mingled well,  
Cautious to give no needless wound,  
Yet faithful all the truth to tell.  
Should any from thy fold remove,  
And give thy cause a wound severe,  
Help us their wanderings to reprove,  
And o'er them all to drop a tear.  
O! let us never, never see  
Contention's sharp and thorny rod;  
Let each to each a Brother be,  
A Brother in the house of God.  
Thus whilst we toil, do Thou bestow  
Thy grace, like showers from vernal  
skies;  
Let rivers of salvation flow;  
Let trees of righteousness arise.